
LIOCO

Chardonnay Russian River Valley
2011

AROMA

orange sherbert, tomato leaf, lime rind

FLAVOR

gravenstein apple, glacier water, lemon pith

FOOD PAIRINGS

shrimp & grits, lobster roll, grilled diver scallops

VINIFICATION

13 tons hand-harvested on sept 20 & oct 14. intensive sorting performed. berries were "broken" before being whole cluster pressed. two-thirds went to barrel, one-third went to tank. fermented on lees with no battonage for 10-mos. naturally occurring malolactic fermentation completed. gentle 'clean-up' filtration prior to bottling.

SITE

from a selection of cooler russian river valley sites situated 8-10 miles from the coast. chardonnay clones 96 & 17 planted at elevations ranging from 40-100 feet in soft, sandy loam soil known locally as "goldridge." strident farming methods produce even ripening. proximity to the cold pacific ocean necessitates an extended growing season which heightens flavor intensity.

NOTES

while our winery experienced some changes during the past two years (we moved the winery and hired a new winemaker), the mission hasn't wavered. our mission has always been: to produce genuine 'wines of place' on california soil. we've long believed that both appropriate site selection and a non-interventionalist approach in the cellar would achieve this end. since 2006, we've been working with viculturalist-ikon mark neal, whose methods of organically farming napa cabernet are benchmark in the valley. recently, we added winemaker john raytek to the team after long admiring the barrel-fermented chardonnays he was making under his own micro-label ceritas. these are chardonnays with a palpable energy like...dare we say?...those found in the cote d'beaune. racy, mineral, judiciously fruited—all woven together and framed by the mere suggestion of oak. moreover, the wood seems to "enhance" the expression. it frames it, like salt does to food. and so, when john joined our team in the summer of 2011, we adopted a more fluid approach with our chardonnays and integrated some neutral oak into the program. this wine comes from two stridently farmed sites in the western edge of the russian river valley. the exceptionally cold 2011 vintage translated to fruit with very low sugars, and low corresponding alcohols (joy!). we fermented some of in tank and some in neutral oak. "tension" is the word that resonates here. like the e string of a mandolin. open a bottle now and enjoy it over a long weekend—day 3 will surprise you. or lay down a few bottles for five or so years and watch the caterpillar grow wings.

DETAILS

appellation: russian river valley
county: sonoma
winemaker: john raytek
production: 770 cases
ph: 3.44
brix: 21.2
total acidity: 6.6
residual sugar: 0.08 g/l
alcohol: 12.8%

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